

Let me just walk my friends in the House through it. Democrats are not budging on the wall. We favor smart, effective border security, not a medieval wall.

A Trump shutdown will not convince a single Democrat to support bilking the American taxpayers for an ineffective, unnecessary, and exorbitantly expensive wall that President Trump promised Mexico would pay for.

I hear Mr. JORDAN and Mr. MEADOWS say: This was a campaign promise. They are only mentioning half of the campaign promise. The promise throughout the campaign was this: We will build a wall, and Mexico will pay for it.

Furthermore, there are not the votes in the Republican House for a wall. There are not the votes in the Senate for a wall—not now, not next week, not next month or beyond.

If Speaker RYAN refuses to put the CR on the floor or President Trump vetoes it, there will be a Trump shutdown, but there will be no wall. And if President Trump or House Republicans cause a shutdown over Christmas, on January 3, the new Democratic House will send the Senate a clean CR bill. Based on passage of the CR last night, it is clear—and to their credit—that Senate Republicans don't want a shutdown.

What is the endgame here? What is the endgame of those who are demanding the President not sign the CR—that the House not pass the CR? It seems, unfortunately, that the Trump temper tantrum is spreading like a contagion down Pennsylvania Avenue to the allies in the House.

Trump's allies in the House can pound their fists on the table all they want, but it is not going to get a wall. They can—having caught the Trump temper fever—jump up and down, yell and scream. It is not going to get a wall. And neither Mr. MEADOWS nor Mr. JORDAN have outlined any conceivable plan on how to achieve what they say they want to achieve.

I would say this to my less frenzied friends in the House. Go ask Mr. JORDAN and ask Mr. MEADOWS: What is your plan? What is your endgame? What is your path to getting the wall?

I suspect that anyone who asks them will find that they don't have one. They are just angry and mad, and so they pound their fists on the table. They have caught the Trump temper tantrum, but they have no conceivable plan, and so their anger will result in a Trump shutdown, but not a Trump wall. Frankly, their anger will result in further discrediting the President whom they support.

Amazingly, Representative MEADOWS said yesterday that the American people will support President Trump shutting down the government over the wall. I don't know what evidence he has for that or whom he speaks to, because every public poll that I have seen shows that the American people are not only strongly against a border

wall, but they are even more strongly against a shutdown to get the wall. Imagine how strongly they would feel as he ties those two things together.

When Mr. MEADOWS says the American people are for it, he must think the American people are only conservative Republicans. If he widened his horizons a bit, he would come to the understanding that shutting down the government over President Trump's wall is futile, self-defeating, and has minimal support among the American people. Even a quarter of President Trump's shrinking base does not support shutting down the government over the wall, and among the vast majority of other Americans who are not part of President Trump's base—and those are the majority of Americans—the strong majority are totally against it.

We need to get something done here to keep the government open over Christmas. We need to tell the hundreds of thousands—millions—of workers that they will get paid over Christmas. The House needs to come to the same sensible conclusion that the Senate came to—that we should not hold millions of innocent Americans hostage to demand something they will never get.

The Senate has produced a clean bill. There are no partisan demands, no poison pill riders. We could have demanded lots of things in the bill that we want. It is just a clean extension of funding. If House Republicans and President Trump refuse to pass it, then we will have a Trump shutdown over Christmas. The choice is theirs.

NOMINATION OF WILLIAM BARR

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, last night we received some extraordinarily concerning news regarding the President's nominee for Attorney General, Mr. William Barr.

According to reports earlier this year, Mr. Barr sent the Justice Department an unsolicited memo criticizing what he believed to be an avenue of investigation by Special Counsel Robert Mueller. Mr. Barr's memo reveals that he is fatally conflicted from being able to oversee the special counsel's investigation and that he should not be nominated for Attorney General.

Mr. Barr believes Presidents, in general, and, more frighteningly, President Trump, who has shown less respect for rule of law than any President, are above the law—much like Justice Kavanaugh—because he has an almost imperial view of the Presidency—as almost a King, not an elected leader. That much comes across in the memo because it doesn't allow legal processes to work against the President, who might be breaking the law.

We will see what Mueller finds out if that is true, but we should let him go forward. The fact that Mr. Barr holds these deeply misguided views and chose to launch them in an unprovoked writ-

ten attack on the special counsel unquestionably disqualifies Mr. Barr from serving as Attorney General again.

Since Mr. Barr hasn't been formally nominated yet, the President must immediately reconsider and find another nominee who is free of conflicts and will carry out the duties of law impartially.

ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL

Mr. SCHUMER. Finally this morning, on another Justice Department matter, the Justice Department seems that it is becoming more and more of a swamp—at least in its top leaders. This time it is Mr. Whitaker.

This morning, we learned that ethics officials at the Justice Department told Acting Attorney General Matthew Whitaker that he did not need to recuse himself from overseeing the special counsel's investigation. The decision by the Justice Department defies logic. Matthew Whitaker has publicly and forcefully advocated for defunding and imposing severe limits on the Mueller investigation, calling it a "mere witch hunt." He also has troubling conflicts of interest, including his relationship with Sam Clovis, who is a grand jury witness in this investigation.

There is clear and obvious evidence of bias on the part of Matthew Whitaker against the special counsel's investigation. To allow him to retain oversight over that investigation without his recusal is incredibly misguided.

The Congress and the American people must be informed of any instance in which Mr. Whitaker has sought or is seeking to interfere with the Mueller investigation. If Mr. Whitaker has sought any limitation on witnesses, funding, subpoenas, or any other limitation, we must be informed of it right now.

We believe that Matthew Whitaker shouldn't be in the job in the first place. His appointment is potentially unconstitutional. His oversight of the Russia investigation is hopelessly biased.

It is clear that President Trump is trying in every way possible to appoint or to nominate people to lead the Justice Department who could well impede the special counsel's investigation.

I thank the Senator from Florida for patiently waiting.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The Senator from Florida.

SYRIA

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, Syria has been a mess and a concern for quite a number of years. By putting in a small footprint now of a little over 2,000 special operations troops, the United States has been considerably successful when you think of what a chaotic place it was and still is and that it was especially inimical to the interests of the United States just a